

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are all of the pending claims, with claims 1 and 9 being written in independent form.

I. Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 112(1st):

The Examiner rejects claims 1 and 9, under 35 USC § 112(1st) because the features (1) “each automation object realizing a partial automation solution,” (2) “a description of technological functionality of the respected automation object” and (3) wherein the respective automation object can be worked on by a number of “users in parallel to create an automation solution in automation technology” (as set forth in claims 1 and 9) are not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to make and/or use the invention. Applicants respectfully disagree.

The objectionable features are discussed throughout the instant specification. For example, the “partial automation solution” feature is supported by paragraphs [0005], [0008], [0011] and [0015]. In particular, paragraph [0005] discloses an automation system that makes it possible to create automation solutions, and paragraph [0002] indicates that the automation system has automation objects. Thus, it is clear from paragraphs [0008], [0011] and [0015] that the automation objects represent or realize the automation solution and in particular represent or realize partial automation solutions. Indeed, paragraph [0008] indicates that example embodiments of the invention permit access to partial solutions via a directory that stores the partial solutions (or automation objects). Also, see paragraph [0011].

The “technological functionality” feature is discussed in paragraphs [0010], [0012] and [0015] of the instant specification. According to paragraph [0010] the technical functionality information may include a list of the modules contained in the automation object.

The “users working in parallel” feature is discussed throughout the instant specification. For example, paragraph [0008] indicates that a plurality of users may access (and work on) the partial solutions (or objects) by virtue of the directory’s structure to allow “parallel working” and “joint working.” The details of the directory structure, which is somewhat analogous to a telephone book, is shown in Fig. 1 and discussed at paragraphs [0010] of the instant specification. For example, as in a telephone book, the name of the object (a partial solution) can be used to find its reference. This makes it possible for other objects/tools to use the objects referenced.

In short, Applicant respectfully submit that those skilled in the art could, in view of the instant specification, practice the invention defined by independent claims 1 and 9. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the raised rejections under 35 USC § 112(1st).

II. Claim Rejection on Prior Art Grounds:

The Examiner rejects claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over US 5,974,572 to Weinberg et al. (“Weinberg”) in view of US 5,987,242 to Bentley et al. (“Bentley”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the following remarks.

Independent claims 1 and 9 recite (among other things) a plurality of automation objects “which are to be created and worked on,” a directory for “entering and storing” object names of automation objects when created, and that the automation object is to be worked on by a plurality of users “in parallel to create the automation solution.” That is, according to independent claims 1 and 9, the automation solution is created by creating and working on the automation objects. At least these features (as recited in independent claims 1 and 9), in combination with the other features recited in independent claims 1 and 9, are not taught or suggested by the prior art relied upon by the Examiner.

The Examiner relies heavily upon the Weinberg reference to teach all of the features defined by independent claims 1 and 9, except for an automation object that can be worked on by a number of users in parallel, and therefore looks to the Bentley reference to allegedly teach this feature. This rejection position is not convincing for the following reasons.

The Examiner’s reliance upon the Weinberg reference is misplaced. If the system of Weinberg is regarded as an automation system (as alleged by the Examiner), then the automation solution to be created is a graphical map of a website. With reference to Fig. 8 of Weinberg, the disclosed system includes a plurality of objects categorized into six object classes, inclusive of an Astra Object 94, a Site Graph Object 114, an Edges Object 119, an Edge Object 116, a Nodes Object 118, and a Node Object 115. Each of these objects may realize a part of the automation solution, i.e., the generation of a graphical map of a website.

The system of Weinberg does not, however, create and work on the objects to create the automation solution. Indeed, Figs. 2-6 and the corresponding description of Weinberg (as well as the portions of Weinberg cited by the Examiner) do not show or describe the objects, but instead

relate to the automation solution (i.e., the graphical map of a website). Thus, the object names allocated to the objects and information data with respect to references in the form of URL's (addresses) and interfaces in the form of links disclosed by Weinberg do not refer to the objects themselves, but to the websites scanned by the Astra system.

In summary, Weinberg teaches that the Astra system includes objects, but the reference does not teach or suggest that the objects themselves may be viewed, requested or worked on. Instead, the output created by the Astra system (i.e., the graphical map of a website) may be viewed, requested or worked on.

Turning to the next point, the Examiner's reliance upon the secondary reference to Bentley is misplaced. According to Bentley, an object is extracted from a project databank into a local database of the respective user. If there are several users, each user receives a copy of the object from the project databank.

In contrast, the system defined by independent claims 1 and 9 has a directory for entering and storing object names of the automation objects when created. This allows the object name of the respective automation object to be used to request a reference to the respective automation object so that the automation object may be worked on by a number of users in parallel to create the automation solution. That is, the plurality of users does not work on separate copies of the object.

As demonstrated above, independent claims 1 and 9 recite features that are not taught or suggested by the references relied upon by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the raised obviousness rejection.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-16 is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Ray Heflin at the telephone number below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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